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NSC BRIEFING

23 September 54

CURRENT SOVIET POLICY AGAINST GERMAN REARMAMENT

- I. Recent Soviet moves show USSR placing heavy reliance on public pressure in Western Europe to force indecision and inaction. Most of the French Socialists and many British Socialists are opposed to German rearmament, unless accompanied by strict controls, while the West German Socialists fear rearmament will make permanent the division of Germany. These groups favor a new attempt at negotiating with the Soviet Union prior to any final decision on rearming of West Germany.
- II. The 9 September press statement issued by the Soviet Foreign Ministry is most recent example of Soviet tactic.
  - A. It was intended as a clear restatement of Soviet opposition to any form of West German rearmament.
  - B. Its wording shows USSR continues to

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rely on the French as the principal means of blocking West German rearmament.

- C. It suggests that USSR does not consider any major concessions necessary at this time to head off rearmament.

III. France: Moscow's aim is to cultivate support of the Mendes-France government for Soviet plans for Germany and European security.

- A. Its method is to offer sufficient bait so that the French will be encouraged to continue their search for alternative to West German rearmament, mainly through negotiations with the USSR.
- B. Moscow's latest overtures to Paris carefully timed to influence EDC vote:
  - 1. Polish offer, 25 August, of treaty of friendship and mutual assistance.
  - 2. Soviet ambassador, 26 August,

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informed Mendes-France Moscow  
saw large measure of agreement  
between Soviet and French positions  
on disarmament.

IV. Britain: Moscow regards Left-Wing Labor  
opinion as most promising field for gen-  
erating opposition to government's policy.

A. Pravda's 9 September blast at Attlee  
an attempt to discredit his leadership  
and qualified support for German re-  
armament.

B. Moscow expressing approval of Bevanite  
position on rearmament. During Labor  
visit to Moscow, Soviet leaders snubbed  
Attlee, and concentrated their atten-  
tion on Bevan.

V. Germany: Moscow has attempted to discredit  
Adenauer's Western orientation by offering  
West Germans hope of reunification. Aim  
is to encourage Franco-German hostility

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and ultimately to bring about reorienta-  
tion which would substitute reunification  
for Western integration as central object-  
ive of Bonn government.

- A. Moscow has repeatedly hammered at  
theme that EDC or any other form of  
German rearmament would permanently  
seal the partition of Germany.

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